

Steal This Hook! War-Weary Souls

By Doug Beyer



The Last War littered Khorvaire with corpses, but it may have been even less kind to those who live on today. Those who survived that century of blood and darkness were left with scarred bodies and tainted memories. These brooding characters can generate emotional and dramatic adventure hooks for your campaign. Welcome to a war-weary souls edition of Steal This Hook!

A Tale of Guilt and Honor

Brother Yerrond, an aging cleric of the Sovereign Host, bashes the ornate stained-glass windows of his temple. He scratches runic symbols on his forehead. He leaves town, carrying a bar laden with weights across his shoulders, leaving his community wondering what hidden guilt had been eating away at him. The heroes are asked to track down Yerrond, and when they do, they find him making his way toward the Mournlands. Yerrond assures them that he hasn't gone mad, but he asks for their help in locating a particular family from Cyre. Because he killed the youngest son during the final years of the Last War, he seeks to offer his life in the name of Dol Arrah to the family as payment for their son's. Brother Yerrond refuses help with his heavy weight during the entire journey, but he appreciates the heroes' assistance with the perils of the trip.



The Captain and the Hag

Captain Farras tells no stories of being a Karrnathi Last War veteran; he was an officer whose red scale armor held decorations from many victories. He fought alongside and *among* legions of elite undead, and he became more comfortable with these vicious, living-hating abominations than with live soldiers. Now that the War has ended, drowning in emptiness and purposelessness, he's still obsessed with those undead creatures. One night, as he roams a graveyard gripping a shred of war-banner, a hunched and twisted figure who perceives his plight approaches him. She offers to teach him the discipline of necromancy, and he accepts. What might become of this foul pact? Will he succeed in leading a troop of howling undead in his red scale armor once more? What is the nature of the hunched hag mentor? What happens when Captain Farras' rampage kills someone he cares about -- will he want to raise her from the dead as well?

Jury Duty

Mrs. Bebblebaum lost her three children in the War over five years ago -- but she doesn't know it. One year ago, the nearsighted and slightly senile old lady opened the door to Gim, a brave changeling who served shoulder-to-shoulder with her three children. Gim began to tell her the tragic news -- but somehow the pathetic look of Mrs.

Bebblebaum made him shift into the persona of her eldest son instead. She embraced him and welcomed him in.

Through a heroic effort of shapeshifting skill, Gim impersonated her three children for a year. However, Mrs. Bebblebaum's brother recently found out, and now Gim is on trial for fraud and supernatural impersonation. According to local law, he must be judged by a "jury of impartial," which usually means travelers not native to the area -- and the PCs are chosen to be that jury.

Mrs. Bebblebaum is heartbroken about her children, but not angry about the deception -- her brother is the complaining party. The heroes must hear the facts of the case from both sides, interpret the laws of the region, and decide whether Gim is guilty. The decision may come down to what the PCs feel about the heart-rending testimonies of Mrs. Bebblebaum, the brother, Gim's commanding officer, and Gim himself.

The Warforged-Forged

A warforged veteran takes up a kind of sculptural armorsmithing and forges dozens of suits of platemail "self-portraits" in an attempt to express and understand his new destiny in a peacetime world. A barely sane worshiper of the Fury named Iruvia takes advantage of the sculptor's industriousness by casting *animate objects* on the suits of armor, filling the warforged's empty manikins with a dark purpose. After Iruvia's temporary army makes a pit stop at the weaponsmith's shop, they terrorize the town. Does Iruvia seek a way to make the armor her permanent entourage? Will the sight of all those copies of himself attacking his home village drive the sculptor mad? Was that Iruvia's plan all along?

Taint of the Past

Kennrun, the site of several major battles on the eastern edge of Breland, is now a grief-stricken human settlement beset with awful memories of the Last War. Strangely, however, memories about the war have been spotty recently. A Sharn-native biographer in Kennrun contacts the heroes when she discovers that the townsfolk have forgotten the War completely. Investigation reveals that strange machinery is running below Fort Kennrun -- an eldritch machine that can steal memories -- and that preparations are being made to expand its power to affect entire countries of Khorvaire. Who built the device, and for what purpose? Has someone else discovered its power, and has that person decided he or she can use it for a good motive? What are the consequences of those memories being evaporated in Kennrun, or elsewhere?

Mini-Hooks

- A minotaur mercenary seeks to recover the bejeweled horn stolen from him in the War.
- House Jorasco healers need an escort on their journey to locate a group of soldiers lost during a decade-old battle.
- During a national veteran's holiday in Zilargo, a demonstrator becomes violent and takes a hostage.
- Pieces of an ancient hobgoblin scroll reveal forgotten ruins buried under the property of a cranky dwarven general.
- King Boranel's daughter Borina seeks war stories from Karrnathi veterans, but she discovers evidence of war crimes. She hires the heroes to help uncover a conspiracy.
- A legion of not-yet-conscious warforged is discovered in a secret lab.
- A shifter father seeks the body of his son, who was presumed to have been killed in action in Aundair.
- Professors at Morgrave University need magical expertise in raising an airship that crashed and sunk to the bottom of Lake Galifar during the War; it may be full of historical treasures.
- Two changeling brothers swear revenge on their abusive commanding officer -- and eventually the entire

Brelish military -- who sent them into unnecessary danger during the War.

About the Author

Doug Beyer spent a lot of time getting philosophy degrees until he figured out that he should just move to Seattle and become a web developer for Wizards of the Coast. Now he spends his days working on games and his evenings playing them. Doug uses the time normally allotted for sleeping to lurk on the Wizards.com message boards as his alter ego, WotC_Doog.

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